



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:
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Water Break Affects Communities in Divide and Burke Counties *Boiling Water Necessary in Crosby, Fortuna, Noonan and Columbus*

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) has been notified of a break in a Western Area Water Supply Authority (WAWSA) pipeline, which will affect the water supplies in several communities and their surrounding areas in northwest North Dakota. According to Jaret Wirtz, Executive Director of WAWSA, a bored pipe underneath a wetland failed and will need to be re-bored to lay a new permanent line. Local authorities are asking that every community, business and resident on the WASWA or BDW water lines use bottled water or boil their water until further notice.

Jody Gunlock, Emergency Manager for Divide County, indicates that the break occurred Saturday approximately three miles south of Crosby. The line runs from Crosby to the other towns involved. WAWSA is working to complete a temporary repair of the line that will provide water to the system, but the temporary water supply will not have been tested and water from the system will need to be boiled until further notice. WAWSA is hopeful that temporary repairs will be made late Sunday or early Monday. Permanent repairs could take several days.

Noonan has activated their old well, but their residents will have to boil the well water to be used for human consumption. Crosby, Fortuna and Columbus will have to use bottled water and boil water as soon as it becomes available. Those affected in Burke County were notified of the problem via a reverse 911 system, according the Burke County Emergency Manager, Barry Jager.

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Authorities advise that until testing shows the water is safe to drink, residents should use bottled water or should boil water from the system until it bubbles vigorously for at least one minute, then let it cool before use. Boiled or bottled water should be used for drinking, cooking, making ice, washing dishes and brushing teeth. Because of special concerns for infants, use only bottled water to mix formula or use canned baby formula that requires no additional water be added.

If you become ill after drinking contaminated water, you should seek medical attention. The usual symptoms of illness from drinking unsafe water include upset stomach, vomiting, diarrhea, fever, cramps and headaches. Children (especially infants), the elderly, and those who have existing health conditions or severely compromised immune systems are at greater risk of developing complications. Therefore, it is important that they receive medical care if symptoms become worse or do not get better.

The local hospital and nursing home that are served by WAWSA have adequate potable water available for their operations. Authorities will be determining whether additional measures will be needed to ensure adequate potable water supplies for the communities involved.

For more information on this emergency, residents are urged to monitor local media and the county website at <http://www.dividecountynynd.org>. Residents who have questions about the return of service and status of the water quality can contact WAWSA during business hours at 701.774.6605 or can visit the WAWSA website at www.wawsp.com. Those who have questions about boiling water or water safety can contact the NDDoH at 701.328.5211.

Once permanent repairs have been made, the NDDoH will work with local communities and WAWSA to ensure the water is safe for human consumption.

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